coupler arrangement for connection of coaches in a train formation. Use of tight lock Centre buffer coupler which is an essential element of this design, also provides anti-climbing feature so that in the event of collision, coaches do not pile on top of each other. This also reduces chances of injury and loss of human life.

(c) Based on initial design, one rake has been manufactured and is in service between Amritsar, Barauni and Saharsa. This rake consists mainly of llnd Class coaches as till now, the design details have been finalized only for llnd Class coaches. For other type of coaches, designs are expected to be finalized in next few months. More rakes will be provided with these features progressively.

Reduction in wheat quota for BPL. and Antyodaya households

*196. SHRI C.PERUMAL:
MISSANUSUIYA UIKEY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to reduce the wheat earmarked for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya households; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Keeping in view the reduced stocks of wheat in the Central pool, a decision was taken to rationalize the allocation of wheat for Below Poverty Line (BPL)/Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) category to each State's average offtake for the last 3 years or the existing allocation, whichever was lower. However, the overall allocation of foodgrains has remained unchanged for BPL/AAY households, as the reduced wheat allocation has been made up by a corresponding increase in rice allocation:

Heritage train in Uttar Pradesh

197. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Uttar Pradesh has

suggested the introduction of a "heritage train" to attract especially the foreign tourists to the State which has, amongst others, the world famous Taj Mahal, India's biggest draw, besides some world heritage sites and a large number of other centres of tourist interest;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals received and the present status of its consideration/implementation; and

(c) the details of proposals received/under consideration, if any, for introduction of such dedicated special trains in other States or between States to cover important tourists circuits in the country?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRILALU PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is a proposal for running a luxury tourist train in the Karnataka Sector. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been entered into between the Railways and Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) in this regard. The design layout of the coaches for this train has been finalized. There is also a proposal for introducing a second Palace on Wheels in the Rajasthan Sector.

Promoting Bio-fertilizers

† *198. SHRI SHREEGOPALVYAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether research has revealed that the production capacity of land is not reduced as a result of increasing the quantity of bio-fertilizers;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to promote it comprehensively and intensively; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Bio-fertilizers are eco-friendly organic fertilizers. Therer is no possibility of reduction of productivity of land due to increased use of bio-fertilizers.

(b) and (c) In order to promote bio-fertilizers in the country, the Government provided financial assistance of Rs. 20.00 lakh per unit for

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.